



JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM  
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN  
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
LANSING

DAN WYANT  
DIRECTOR

March 28, 2005

Dear Trail Rider:

This letter is coming to you to ask for your help in stopping the spread of Equine Infectious Anemia (EIA).

On March 1, 2005, a horse in Michigan was diagnosed positive for EIA. The horse has been euthanized. All horses in the immediate vicinity of the positive horse have tested negative. This is good news. Our investigation of this case, though, has shown that the horse testing positive in March was most likely exposed and became infected during the biting fly season of 2004 (May 1 – October 31). This means that last year the positive horse could have been infectious to other horses. It also means the horse that was the source of infection for the March positive horse could have been a source of infection for other horses.

The Michigan Department of Agriculture investigates all cases of EIA in Michigan. Usually we are able to trace and test horses exposed to a positive horse. In this case, however, the March positive horse participated on several trail rides during 2004. Because of the large number of horses potentially involved and difficulty in tracking time of participation, we are not able to track and test each horse.

We are advising owners of horses who participated in trail rides between May 1 and October 31, 2004 in the Waterloo Recreation Area or through the Michigan Trail Riders Association to have their horses tested for EIA. This testing would be done by your private practitioner veterinarian at owner expense. It is advisable that testing be performed prior to April 30. After April 30, if a horse is diagnosed with EIA, a minimum 45-day quarantine time is needed for testing of horses exposed to the positive horse. This is because the biting fly season is generally May 1- October 31. After a horse is bitten by a fly carrying EIA virus we need to wait 45 days to be able to detect the new infection.

MDA continues to investigate the March case of EIA. Our state veterinarians may determine that in some circumstances, a strong exposure history exists. In such a case, state veterinarians would perform testing at state expense.

If you have questions about EIA, contact your private practitioner veterinarian or the Michigan Department of Agriculture, Animal Industry Division at 517-373-1077.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. We hope that annual EIA testing is part of your routine horse care program. If not, and you participated in trail rides last year, we hope you will consider EIA testing this year. Testing horses is our best tool for finding and controlling EIA.

Sincerely,

Nancy A. Frank, DVM, MPH  
Assistant State Veterinarian  
Michigan Department of Agriculture  
Animal Industry Division